

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0427

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: INFORMAL SESSION WITH EASTERN REPS NOVEMBER 19, 1974

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN THE NOVEMBER 19 INFORMAL SESSION OF THE VIENNA TALKS, THE ALLIES WERE REPRESENTED BY THE CANADIAN REP, FRG REP AND US REP, AND THE EAST BY SOVIET REPS KHLESTOV AND SMIRNOVSKY, CZECHOSLOVAK REP KLEIN AND POLISH REP STRULAK. THERE WAS ACTIVE DEBATE ON ALLIED PROPOSALS FOR EXCHANGE OF DATA, WITH ALLIED REPS GIVING REASONS WHY DATA EXCHANGE WAS IN INTEREST OF BOTH SIDES, AND KHLESTOV REPEATING THAT EAST WOULD NOT DISCUSS DATA UNTIL AFTER QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE HAD BEEN SETTLED. ALLIED REPS SAID NEGATIVE EASTERN REPLIES TO ALLIED QUESTIONS REGARDING THE EASTERN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL HAD SERVED TO CONFIRM NEGATIVE ALLIED CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL AND
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MADE THE PROPOSAL AN UNPRODUCTIVE BASIS FOR DISCUSSION.

EASTERN REPS CLAIMED ALLIES WERE STILL PUSHING THE ORIGINAL WESTERN PROGRAM AND SHOULD SHOW MORE FLEXIBILITY. WHEN CANADIAN REP CRITICIZED FURTHER EASTERN PRESS LEAKS ON THE CONTENT OF THE EASTERN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL, KHLESTOV ONCE AGAIN DID NOT MAKE ANY EFFORT TO DEFEND EASTERN BEHAVIOR, BUT INSTEAD MADE BLANKET CLAIM THAT ALL LEAKS WERE OF WESTERN ORIGIN.

2. CANADIAN REP OPENED WITH STATEMENT THAT DISCUSSION OF DATA WOULD HELP PARTICIPANTS REACH AGREEMENT ON OTHER ISSUES AND THAT IT WOULD BE TO THE MUTUAL ADVANTAGE OF BOTH SIDES TO PROCEED TO DISCUSSION OF EXCHANGE OF TOTALS CONCURRENTLY WITH CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF OTHER TOPICS. KHLESTOV REPEATED EASTERN POSITION THAT DISCUSSION OF DATA MUST FOLLOW AND NOT PROCEED RESOLUTION OF QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE, LIKE WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THE OUTSET AND WHAT KIND OF FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED AND "OTHERS." KHLESTOV WAS UNABLE TO DREDGE UP ANY REASON FOR THIS POSITION OTHER THAN THE ARGUMENT THAT MAJOR QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE WERE USUALLY SETTLED IN NEGOTIATION BEFORE DETAILS WERE DEALT WITH. HE IMPLIED THAT ALLIES WERE OUTSIDE OF THE AGREED AGENDA POINT OF WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THE OUTSET IN BUT RETRACTED THIS WHEN CHALLENGED. KHLESTOV ALSO CLAIMED THAT EASTERN REPS HAD NOT CONTESTED ACCURACY OF WESTERN DATA PROVIDED THE EAST, BUT BACKTRACKED ON THIS REMARK WHEN CHALLENGED. ALLIED REPS MAINTAINED FOCUS OF DISCUSSION OF DATA EXCHANGE FOR CONSIDERABLE PERIOD DESPITE KHLESTOV'S UNCOOPERATIVE ATTITUDE.

3. CZECHOSLOVAK REP KLEIN MADE ROUTINE STATEMENT ON THE EASTERN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL, CLAIMING EAST HAD INCORPORATED MANY WESTERN INTERESTS IN THE EASTERN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL, BUT THAT WEST HAD FAILED TO DO THE SAME WITH ANY ASPECT OF THE ORIGINAL EASTERN PROPOSAL. US REP REFUTED THIS. ALLIED REPS INSISTED THAT EAST SHOULD ANSWER EARLIER ALLIED QUESTIONS ON EASTERN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL: (A) THE WESTERN QUESTION AS TO WHETHER EAST ENVISAGED RECIPROCAL COMMITMENTS BY PARTICIPANTS TO MAINTAIN CEILINGS ON FORCES AFTER REDUCTIONS HAD TAKEN

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PLACE AND WHETHER THESE CEILINGS WOULD BE EXPRESSED IN NUMERICAL TERMS. AFTER CONSIDERABLE BEATING AROUND THE BUSH, KHLESTOV REPLIED THAT EAST HAD NOT DEVELOPED A FINAL POSITION ON THIS SUBJECT, BUT AT PRESENT, EAST ENVISAGED INDIVIDUAL GENERAL COMMITMENT BY EACH DIRECT PARTICIPANT NOT TO EXCEED THE NEW LEVEL OF ITS FORCES FOLLOWING REDUCTIONS. (B) THE QUESTION OF WHETHER IN ITS INITIAL STEP REDUCTION PROPOSAL, THE EAST WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE MORE

REDUCTIONS IN ALL THOSE FORCES WHERE IT HAD MORE AT THE START. KHLESTOV REPLIED THAT THE EAST WOULD NOT DO THIS, BUT WOULD STICK TO THE APPROACH OF EQUAL NUMBER REDUCTIONS OF BOTH SIDES. HE CLAIMED THE INTERNAL BALANCE OF THE INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL AS BETWEEN ELEMENTS OF THE EASTERN POSITION AND ELEMENTS OF THE WESTERN POSITION IT CONTAINED WOULD BE DISTURBED IF THE EAST MOVED TO PERCENTAGE REDUCTION APPROACH. KHLESTOV DENIED THAT EAST HAD ACCEPTED OR WOULD ACCEPT THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE THAT THE EAST SHOULD TAKE MORE REDUCTIONS THAN THE WEST.

4. FOLLOWING THESE REPLIES US REP SAID THAT EASTERN ANSWERS THUS FAR TO QUESTIONS WEST HAD ASKED ABOUT THE EASTERN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL HAD HAD THE EFFECT OF CONFIRMING THE NEGATIVE WESTERN ASSESSMENT OF THAT PROPOSAL AND OF DEMONSTRATING ONCE MORE THAT IT DID NOT PROVIDE A PRODUCTIVE BASIS FOR CONTINUED DISCUSSION. STRULAK AND KHLESTOV AGAIN COMPLAINED OF INFLEXIBLE, "UNPRODUCTIVE" WESTERN ATTITUDE TOWARDS EASTERN INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL. STRULAK AGAIN CRITICIZED WESTERN FOCUS ON GROUND FORCES, CLAIMING THAT IF IT WERE FOLLOWED, AIR FORCES AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS WOULD BE FREE TO INCREASE. AT END OF DISCUSSION, US REP ONCE AGAIN BROUGHT SUBJECT BACK TO DATA EXCHANGE, SAYING WEST EXPECTED MORE POSITIVE REPLY FROM EAST.

5. IT WAS AGREED TO HOLD NEXT INFORMAL SESSION ON NOVEMBER 26. EAST WILL BE HOST. END SUMMARY.

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